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**Testimony Filed with the Appropriations Committee For
HB5037 An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2023
February 17, 2022**

The Connecticut Association of School Business Officials offers the following comments regarding HB 5037:

ECS. The Governor's proposed budget for FY2023 recognizes that technical anomalies in the ECS phase-in process have impacted certain districts and proposes changes that will "hold harmless" these districts to their FY2022 grants for FY2023. In addition to these changes, we recommend the elimination of the planned ECS reductions for 95 districts through the end of the phase-in period. Many of these districts are not wealthy and are slated to lose millions in ECS funding per year through this period. This is unfair to many of these towns and does not meet the needs of all our students.

Excess Cost Reimbursement Grant. We are concerned of the continued capping of the excess cost reimbursement grant. This grant, which helps support our neediest students, has been significantly underfunded for many years, while the costs of providing special education services have grown substantially. This combination of factors significantly compromises the ability of districts to provide adequate educational needs for all children. This situation has been further exacerbated by the pandemic, resulting in learning loss for all our students including students with special needs. For all these reasons, we strongly recommend that the Appropriations Committee fully fund this important grant.

State support for IAQ. We support fully the Governor's proposal to provide \$90 million to support air quality enhancements for CT public schools. We understand that these funds will be used to augment local investments. Although we realize this is just a proposal, we request more information as to how the \$90 million was calculated and how these funds will be awarded to school districts.

The education of our youth is a top priority for all of us. School officials work collaboratively with many stakeholders to maximize results that benefit both our students and our taxpayers. Proper funding of education at all levels is important to provide opportunities for successful outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these important matters.

About us: The Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) is a non-profit professional association that represents school business officials throughout the State of Connecticut. School business officials work closely with school boards, school superintendents, administrators, staff, public officials, and communities; and we are responsible for most aspects of school business and operations.